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## SEC Conference News

### Staff Plans for 2012

At a recent daylong planning event in October for the Southeast Conference staff, we looked ahead together at the program year 2012. Debbie Spearman is planning a strategic plan for financial development for local churches. Kathy Clark and Sarah Kim continue to work on the Global Theological Education event in Thailand, which will take place in January 2012. Further, they are launching the PATHWAYS program, with initial courses being offered this fall, and outreach to other conferences to recruit interest and participation. Perhaps of greatest interest and importance, the Annual Meeting of the Conference will take place on Saturday, June 9, hosted by First Congregational Christian UCC, Birmingham. Friday evening, June 8 there will be the TAP graduation banquet and commencement in Birmingham. The Annual Meeting Planning Committee

will include Rodney Franklin and two members of First Church, Jim Crabb, Ginny Nixon, Susan Dunn, Tim Downs and one other.



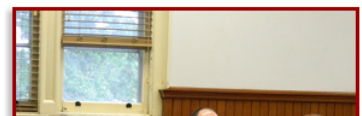
### Southeast Conference Develops Partnership with Lancaster Theological Seminary

As a part of the growing partnership with Lancaster Theological Seminary (LTS), and the Southeast Conference working with them to develop PATHWAYS, continue collaborations with the Global Theological

Education program, and other engagements, Tim Downs has been elected to the Board of Trustees of the seminary. Tim has said, "the development of leadership for the changing United Church of Christ continues to be a challenge and priority for our conference. I hope that through this partnership, we, seminary and conference will be able to mutually support one another in our common task of training and equipping leaders".

Photos appearing to the right were taken at the recent meetings at LTS where Kathy Clark presented on PATHWAYS and Tim Downs was present for discussions.

[Link here to visit the website for Lancaster Theological Seminary.](#)



## Southeast Conference FAQ's

Who is the SEC?

Who is the UCC?

How Do I Find a UCC Church?

What Ministries are Available?

Is Training Available?

### Alabama-Tennessee Association Fall Meeting - "Making Connections"

"Making Connections" was the theme of the Alabama-Tennessee Association Fall Meeting, which took place on September 30 and October 1. Hosted by Howard Congregational UCC in Nashville, the biannual gathering was a time of creative worship, interesting workshops, wonderful fellowship, and excellent preaching.



[Click for Slideshow!](#) [Click for Slideshow!](#)

Planned and led by the UCC seminarians from Vanderbilt Divinity School under the leadership of Cameron Barr, the intergenerational event made connections between our deep history and the church of the future. A highlight of the gathering was the ecclesiastical council for Member in Discernment Benjamin Robert Konecny, who was unanimously approved for ordination pending a call. On Friday evening, clergy from the Association met for an informal gathering to make and renew connections with one another. Many thanks go out to Moderator Gary Luther Myers, Pastor Christophe Ringer, COM Chair Barbara Everett, the members of Howard Congregational UCC, and the planning team for bringing us together as church.



### Georgia-South Carolina Association Gathers for Fall Meeting

On Saturday, October 15, 60 members of the Georgia-South Carolina Association gathered in the newly renovated sanctuary of Pilgrimage UCC, Marietta, to conduct business, worship, join in fellowship and celebrate. Cornelius Watts, moderator, opened the meeting by calling for an ecclesiastical council.

The Council examined Laura Arnold for ordination, and unanimously approved her to proceed. Laura



preached a sermon inviting those gathered to transformation through creative non-violence. This action was particularly noteworthy because Laura is the first member in discernment to seek ordination through the new multiple paths to ministry. They then acted to received Kirkwood UCC as a congregation in full standing in the United Church of Christ. From its beginnings four years ago in a coffee shop, Kirkwood UCC has grown to 60 in worship, and been approved for a loan to purchase a building. The gathering then joined in worship, which music led by a combined choir of Kirkwood and Pilgrimage churches, and the children's' choir of Kirkwood. Communion was celebrated



Following lunch, the gathering came together for business, in which they elected Elizabeth Clement and Debbie Spearman as moderator and vice-moderator of the association respectively to begin in their offices following the spring annual meeting. Debbie Spearman gave an update on the status of the Transforming Churches, Transforming Lives Campaign. The event ended with a panel representing Virginia-Highland Church, Pilgrimage UCC, Circular Congregational UCC, and First Congregational UCC, Atlanta in a free wheel conversation about church as sacred space. The spirit of the meeting was warm and enthusiastic noting all the signs of renewal and vision that are taking root in the association.

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### East Alabama-West Georgia Association Gathers for 79<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting and 111<sup>th</sup> Session of the Alabama Christian Council

Twenty people gathered on Saturday October 23 at Oak Grove Congregational Christian Church, UCC, and Pine Mountain, GA. In the roll call of churches, there were three churches present. Moderator Wayde Washburn opened with a reflection on the state of the association, noting that in the 1980's there were 35 churches in the association, and now there are four. He lifted up the noteworthy history of the association, and the "cloud of witnesses, and host of saints" that have been a part of building that history. Naming Roy Bain, Joe French,



Warren Blankenhorn, the Dollar family as those on whose shoulders we stand, Wayde challenged us to begin thinking of where we go from here. He noted that this is truly a time of transition, and we are called to live in these days faithfully and fully.

Tim Downs gave an annual financial report for the association. There is \$28,482.28 in the checking account, and a balance of \$104,861.23 in the United Church Foundation account for theological scholarships. This money came from the sale of First Congregational Church, Roanoke, AL. Downs then gave a report on the conference. He said that while the vitality and growth of the conference was not evident in this association, there is no doubt that the successes of today are built on the commitments that were made by those before us. Much of that growth is in urban areas across the South, and the

only urban area in this association is Columbus.

We then received reports from each of the churches present. United Columbus noted that they still have four members who meet in a Burger King when their pastor, Jim Johnson is in town. The church building which they have turned over to the Columbus Historic Foundation is being renovated. Oakgrove Congregational Christian Church is continuing to "rock and roll", although it is struggling with membership. It was reported in the words of Monty Python that Sandy Creek UCC, "ain't dead yet". Following additional report, elections were held and Wayde Washburn was reelected moderator, Ira David, elected vice-moderator, and Betty Moon will continue as secretary. The Association voted to dedicate \$3500 to staff support in the Conference.

The keynoter for the occasion was Mike Stroud, the director of the History Project. He traced the history of this association from the earliest days of James O'Kelly to W.M.J. elder who with his family established 22 churches on the banks of the Chattahoochee River, beginning in modest brush arbors. He noted with particular thanks the roles of Millard Fuller and Jimmy Lightbourne in bring about the formation of the Southeast Conference over the objections of the segregationists at this time.




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### Capital Campaign Continues Growth

Twenty-one SEC Churches have now made their pledge to the Capital Campaign. Placing our new total at: **\$508,000**

[Link to list of current pledged churches.](#)

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### Living into the Future of Theological Education

October 8, Tim Downs Dorothea Lotze Kola and Kathy Clark led a daylong event, in Chattanooga, TN, for

advisors and prospective advisors for members in discernment. The purpose of the event was to make clear the role of advisor and what the Committees on Ministry ought to expect from them. It was a time of dynamic interaction, and high interest. At a meeting on November 12 in Atlanta, we will focus on details of the processes that will be open to all members in discernment, their advisers and prospective advisers.

A Breathtaking Blue Ridge Retreat  
A Faith Inspired Look Toward Wholeness

On the beautifully, colorful fall weekend of Oct. 7-9, hundreds of women from the southern region joined together for a time of fun, fellowship, relaxation and spiritual encounter. This all took place at the United Church of Christ's Southern Regional Women's Retreat held at the UCC Conference Center in Blowing Rock, NC. We experienced together "A Faith Inspired Look Toward Wholeness" with UCC's Minister for Health Care Justice, Barbara Baylor, complete with many motivating and educational workshops,



2011 Women's Retreat! 2011

Women's Retreat!

mountain folklore, a silent auction and inspiring music. Women from the Southeast conference joined those from the Southern, Florida and South Central Conferences for this wonderful weekend together. Click on the slide show to the left to see the many smiling faces at this year's retreat.

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<a href="#">SEC Campaign - October 2011</a>	<a href="#">Steps to Planting a New Church</a>
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FAVORITE LINKS

► Bridge 4 Faith

► The Center for Progressive Renewal

► United Church of Christ

► Mission Insite

► Resource Center

EVENTS CALENDAR

« < November 2011 > »

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	1	2	3

Steps to Planting a New Church

News

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